REMARKS

In the Official Action mailed **December 8, 2003** the Examiner reviewed claims 1-24. Claims 1-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Schneider et al (USPN 6,105,027, hereinafter "Schneider") in view of Ross et al (USPN 6,643,648, hereinafter "Ross").

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Independent claims 1, 9, and 17 were rejected as being unpatentable over Schneider in view of Ross. Applicant respectfully points out that the systems of Schneider and Ross are directed to controlling access to **only data** (see Schneider, Abstract, and Ross, Abstract). Additionally, Applicant respectfully points out that Ross teaches encrypting every nth row in a database **without regard to the sensitivity** of the data in that row (see Ross, col. 7, lines 43-48).

In contrast, the present invention is directed to limiting access to **sensitive users** as well as sensitive data (see page 8, lines 14-20 of the instant application). Limiting access to sensitive users as well as sensitive data is beneficial because it prevents a rogue administrator from becoming a sensitive user, and thereby obtaining access to sensitive objects indirectly.

Additionally, the present invention operates by **encrypting the sensitive object and only the sensitive object** (see page 6, line 23 to page 7, line 2 of the instant application). There is nothing within Schneider or Ross, either separately or in concert, which suggests encrypting the sensitive object and only the sensitive object. Schneider is silent on encrypting the sensitive object and Ross teaches away from encrypting the sensitive object and only the sensitive object by encrypting every nth row regardless of whether the row contains sensitive data. With the combined system of Schneider and Ross, non-sensitive data may be encrypted while sensitive data may not be encrypted.

Accordingly, Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17 to include the limitations of dependent claims 6, 14, and 22 to clarify that the present

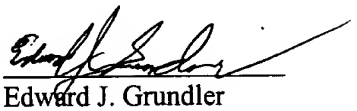
invention limits access to sensitive users as well as sensitive data to prevent a rogue administrator from becoming a sensitive user, and thereby obtaining access to sensitive objects indirectly. These amendments find support on page 8, lines 14-20 of the instant application. Dependent claims 6, 14, and 22 have been canceled without prejudice. Applicant has also amended independent claims 1, 9, and 17 to clarify that the present invention operates by encrypting the sensitive object and only the sensitive object. These amendments find support on page 6, line 23 to page 7, line 2 of the instant application.

Hence, Applicant respectfully submits that independent claims 1, 9, and 17 as presently amended are in condition for allowance. Applicant also submits that claims 2-5 and 7-8, which depend upon claim 1, claims 10-13 and 15-16, which depend upon claim 9, and claims 18-21 and 23-24, which depend upon claim 17, are for the same reasons in condition for allowance and for reasons of the unique combinations recited in such claims.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that the present application is presently in form for allowance. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By 
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